

# READING *across* the CURRICULUM 3

*Non fiction text for Guided Silent Reading Lessons*

## BIRDS



**Hilton Ayrey**

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# USING THE TEXT



## Reading across the Curriculum 3 : BIRDS

Twenty information reports covering a wide range of age-graded reading levels, providing you with the resources and the know-how to put in place a quality reading programme that will equip your students to be successful life-long readers.

### Three Possibilities for Using Non-Fiction Text

Here are the some options for using this resource.

#### 1. A Vehicle for the Explicit Teaching of Comprehension Strategies

The goal is the explicit teaching and guided practice of comprehension strategies (or decoding strategies if there is still a need).

The content is secondary – it is the context for strategy practice. If your group only gets half way through a text then so be it. You will have achieved your goal if your students have spent 20-30 minutes getting the mileage they will need to habituate a new strategy.

Turn to page 51 for more details on Comprehension Strategy Instruction.

#### 2. An Investigation in Science

You can use your instructional reading group time to wrestle with some content that is applicable to some other curriculum area, in this instance Science. This was the intention behind the title 'Reading across the Curriculum'.

Our big question to guide an investigation on birds is, *"How do the physical features and the behaviour patterns of birds help them to survive?"*

Answering this question requires students to construct meaning from text and then apply it, analyse it and synthesize it.

Turn to page 52 for Learning Outcomes in Science.

#### 3. Exploration of the Information Report Genre

Using your instructional reading time to support your writing programme makes sense. If your class are writing information reports then use this resource to read and study good models of the genre. Focus on indentifying the structure and the language features of the reports and learning to critique the text being read.

Turn to page 52 for Learning Outcomes in Written Language

### Important Challenges

**The first option** is aimed at continuing the process of 'Learning to Read' - the teaching and practice of reading strategies so that your readers can decode and construct meaning as they read. This requires a clear understanding of what these strategies are and a methodology to teach them. Did you know that it takes up to 18 months of regular practice to habituate a new mental strategy?

**The second option** can only be done meaningfully if the students have the skills to construct meaning for themselves. They need an understanding of the text before they can engage in the applying, analysing, synthesizing required.

**The third option** requires even higher order evaluative processing and critical thinking to extract criteria and evaluate the quality of writing.

Each options presents an increasingly complex outcome. Instead of tackling the reading programme in a haphazard, piecemeal manner ('a bit of this and a bit of that') it is important to have a sound understanding of the developmental progression of reading strategies that does exist and make provision for this in the way we teach.

#### See what this developmental progression looks like on page 49.

Sign-up for **CSI ONLINE**, our online training programme which will provide you with quality professional training in Comprehension Strategy Instruction.

# USING FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES



Let's face it; follow-up activities are an organisational necessity if you want to be able to spend time doing the real work in your reading programme - guided reading with small ability groups.

But they must be more than just that. Here is a list of follow-up shoulds and a shouldn't that have stood the test of time.

Follow-up activities...

## **1. Should be preceded by guided reading of the text**

An instructional programme that requires students to read a passage by themselves and then work on some follow-up activities isn't an instructional reading programme – there is no instruction. Guided reading ensures that the text has been unpacked and understood. The reader is now ready to do something with the information.

## **2. Should be preceded by explicit teaching of the strategies and thinking required by the activity**

If an activity is going to be meaningful for the learner there must be time for a clear explanation and some modelling of what is required. Give students many opportunities with the same activity so that they can develop some fluency with the strategies involved. The challenge comes from applying the same activity to new content.

## **3. Should be seen as an important part of 'after reading' comprehension strategy development**

A chance to revisit text and think more deeply about the information or the message that has been read has great benefits for the reader. Under the umbrella of 'Use it or Lose It', reworking or deeper processing of ideas and information makes it more memorable (assists transference from short term memory to long term memory), teaches the reader to be strategic about the information they read and as such, empowers and motivates them.

## **4. Should involve choice and challenge**

Providing a variety of activities that cater for individual learning preferences is very motivating for the learner. Working with thinking tools such as Bloom's Taxonomy provides readers with a powerful schema for their own metacognition and transfers across all learning. Give them choice about the activities they do. Don't kill the enthusiasm by being pedantic or wringing it dry.

## **5. Should have an audience**

Doing endless work for the teacher has a very limited appeal. The brilliant and creative thinking that goes into challenging follow-up activities must find the light of day – you must have a system for publishing best work, a chance to share it with the class.

## **6. Shouldn't go on and on for ever**

The reading programme shouldn't be dominated by follow-up activities. There should be a natural flow from the intensity of a guided reading lesson, a time for follow-up and further study of that text, followed by a personal reading programme for mileage – a chance to practice and habitualise the strategies you are teaching. Make sure that your students understand that their reading programme is about READING.

See pages 53-59 for a further explanation of how we achieve these things with the follow-up activities in this resource, and some sample answers to help with your teaching and modelling of these activities.





# **Information Reports and Activities**

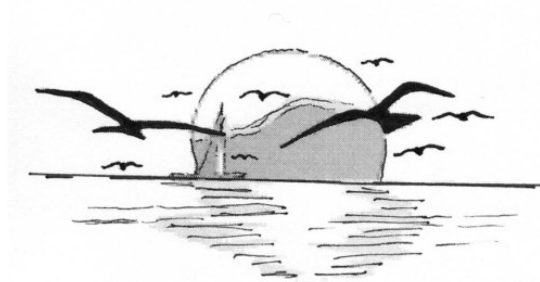
**Set 1: RA 7-8  
Seabirds**

**Set 2: RA 8-9  
Birds of Africa**

**Set 3: RA 9-10  
Birds of Australia**

**Set 4: RA 10-12  
Birds of North America**

**Set 5: RA 12-14  
Birds of the Amazon**



# SEABIRDS



## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

Seabirds are like all birds. They have feathers and wings and they lay eggs. Not all of them can fly.

Seabirds have the largest habitat on earth, the ocean. Some live far out at sea. Some live closer to land. Most of them find places to nest on the coast or islands.

Seabirds are usually black, white and grey. These colours help them to blend in at sea when they are looking for food. They have more feathers than other birds to help keep them warm and dry. Most seabirds have webbed feet which help them move about in the water.

They find most of their food in the sea. They eat fish and other small sea animals. Some seabirds find their food close to the surface. They catch it by dipping their heads under the water. Others fly above the water and dive in when they see something tasty.

Their enemies in the air are larger birds. Hawks and eagles will attack them from above. When seabirds land on the water to rest, large fish will sometimes grab them from below. Dogs, cats and rats will steal their eggs from their nests during breeding time.

All birds have babies so that their type of bird doesn't die out. Many seabirds nest in big groups on islands far away from people and land animals. They lay eggs and keep them warm until they hatch. They put a lot of work into looking after their babies. While one parent sits on the eggs, or looks after the young birds, the other parent looks for food. It holds food in its throat and brings it back for the baby.

Many seabirds like to be alone for most of the year but most seabirds enjoy company at nesting time. Seabirds can form cities of thousands of nests. They are very noisy places.

Humans create problems for seabirds. Sometimes there is not enough fish because fishing boats have taken too much. Oil that has been spilt into the sea destroys their habitat and gets into their feathers.

# SEABIRDS

## Set 1:1 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Where do you find most seabirds?
2. What do seabirds eat?

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

3. Show you understand these words from the report by writing down what the word means, using it in a sentence of your own, and drawing a picture.  
**habitat, coast, webbed, company**
4. Draw a picture to show how seabirds feed their babies.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.**
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a seabird.
7. **Comic Strip**  
Make a comic strip about how seabirds live. Use speech bubbles or captions.  
**Include some information from the report.**

### ANALYSING - Identifying features that help seabirds survive

8. **Information Web**  
Make a list of the physical features and behaviours of seabirds that are mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these things help them to survive. Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

SEA BIRDS
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 → more feathers → keep them warm and dry

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

9. **Super Seabird**  
Design a new seabird which is much better at surviving in its sea habitat. Draw and label your improvements.  
You could include
  - Protection from attack from above (larger birds) and below (big fish)
  - Improvements for finding and catching fish
  - Design a nest where its chicks are always safe**Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.**



# The ALBATROSS



The largest sea bird is the albatross.  
It is also the largest flying bird in the world.

Albatrosses like the cold and are mostly found in the southern seas. They live at sea day and night. They sleep for a short time on the water but most of their lives are spent in the air. They only come to land when it is time to breed.

Albatrosses are well made for a life at sea. They have very long, slender wings. This means they can glide for hours over the sea without having to flap their wings or land. They have a big hook on the end of their beak which helps them scoop up food out of the sea. The edges of the beak are very sharp. This helps the albatross to hold on to fish it catches while it is flying. Albatrosses can smell fish from a long way off, even at night.

They eat fish, squid and other sea creatures. They follow whales so that they can clean up the bits left over after the whales feed. They also follow ships for days and eat food scraps that are thrown out.

When it is time to lay their eggs they come in from the sea and find a cliff top. They make a nest from dried mud. The mother birds lay just one very large egg. The parents look after it very carefully. They both take turns sitting on their egg until it hatches. Then they take turns looking after the baby and feeding it. They will travel huge distances to find food. When the chick has grown up, it leaves and begins to glide around the world itself.

Because they nest in lonely, faraway places there are not many animals around to steal their eggs. But man's rubbish sometimes reaches them on the sea. Some albatrosses die because they have eaten plastic. The biggest problem is when they follow fishing boats because they go for the bait on the fishing lines. If they get hooked they will be dragged under the water and drown.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The ALBATROSS



## Set 1:2 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What does the albatross use to make a nest?
2. What does an albatross like to eat?
3. Write a question like the ones above. Write down the answer as well.  
***You must be able to find the answer in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture to show what happens when an albatross follows a fishing boat.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.***
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of an albatross.
7. **Comic Strip**  
Make a comic strip showing how the albatross lives. Use speech bubbles.  
***Include some information from the report.***

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the albatross survive

8. **Information Web**  
Make a list of all the physical features of the albatross mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these features and the way they behave help them survive. Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

ALBATROSS
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 → very large → other birds don't attack them

### EVALUATING - How safe is the albatross

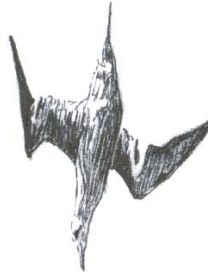
9. **Predator Rating** - give albatrosses a predator rating from 1 to 10  
**1 = no danger from predators      10 = very high danger from predators**  
Give a reason for your rating using information from the report and your own ideas.

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. **Albatross Upgrade**  
Make some changes to the albatross that would make it easier to survive in its habitat. You could include
  - a warning device so that it doesn't get hooked on fishing lines and doesn't try to eat plastic
  - a way for it to rest on the sea without being attacked by predators***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***

# The GANNET

Gannets are medium-sized seabirds about one metre in length. They are famous for their diving.



They spend a lot of time at sea. They flap and glide up and down the coastline looking for food. Sometimes they land on the water to rest. They only come to land when it is time to build their nests. They like high, rocky places close to the water.

The gannet is especially designed for diving from great heights. It flies over the sea looking for fish that swim near the surface. When it sees a school of fish it drops down headfirst at great speed. It folds its wings in close to its body at the last minute. It has lots of small air sacs under its skin to protect it when it hits the water.

Because of its high dive the gannet can go much deeper than other birds. It will swim around and catch and swallow as many fish as it can while it is under water. It likes small fish and squid. It has a strong bill which is just right for catching fish. Because gannets are mainly white, fish do not see them flying overhead.

Gannets nest on far-away islands and coasts. They pair up for life and try to return to the same nest every year. The nest is just a dip in the ground lined with bits of seaweed. A huge crowd of birds fights for the best nest spot! Nests are very close together. Although gannets quarrel over nests, they do seem to like living, fishing and nesting together.

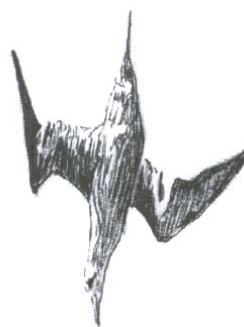
Each pair has just one pale blue egg a year. The baby is born blind and with no feathers. It needs lots of care. The parents are kept very busy finding food and looking after their growing baby. Food for the chick is swallowed and brought back up again when the parent returns to the nest.

They need to watch out for larger sea birds that will try to steal their eggs. In most places, you are not allowed to kill gannets.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The GANNET



## Set 1:3 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What is the gannet famous for?
2. Where do gannets like to build nests?
3. Write a question like the ones above. Write down the answer as well.  
***You must be able to find the answer in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture to show how a gannet gets its food.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.***
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. ***Poetry***  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a gannet.
7. ***Comic Strip***  
Make a comic strip about how a gannet lives. Use speech bubbles or captions.  
***Include some information from the report.***

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help gannets survive

8. ***Information Web***  
Make a list of all physical features mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these features and the way gannets behave help them survive.  
Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

<b>GANNETS</b>
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 → have good eyesight → can see fish in the water when flying

### EVALUATING - How safe is the gannet

9. ***Predator Rating*** - give gannets a predator rating from 1 to 10  
***1 = no danger from predators      10 = very high danger from predators***  
Give a reason for your rating using information from the report and your own ideas.

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. ***Gannet Upgrade***  
Make some changes to the gannet that would make it easier to survive in its habitat. You could
  - make it even better at diving
  - design a better bill for catching lots of fish under water***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***

# The PENGUIN

Penguins are birds that do not fly but swim. There are seventeen kinds of penguin.

Many penguins live in the cold lands, seas and islands near the South Pole. Some live in warmer places such as New Zealand, Australia and South America. They are most at home in the water. They will sometimes swim for months at a time. They even sleep in the sea.

Penguins are designed to live in this very cold habitat. They have a thick layer of blubber to help keep them warm. Their feathers are waterproof. When they are on land they huddle together to keep each other warm. They have no feathers on their wings. They do not use their wings to fly but to swim. On land they walk upright like people. They have short legs and waddle or hop when they walk.

In the water, penguins are very fast. They are very good at chasing and catching their food under water. They can see better under the water than they can on land. They like to eat fish and squid.

At nesting time, penguins find a mate and make a nest out of small rocks. Thousands of other penguins nest in the same place. This helps to protect the eggs and babies. Emperor Penguins do not make nests. They carry their one egg on their feet under a cosy fold of their stomachs. In warmer places, nests are in thick bushes or in holes under the ground.

These birds love being together in large groups. They swim together hunting for food. They nest together and they 'talk' a lot, calling to each other.



There are many dangers for penguins. Large gulls try to eat their eggs and their small babies. At sea, penguins are chased by killer whales, seals and sharks. Those living in warmer places are chased by animals. Also, oil accidents in the sea can harm them.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The PENGUIN



## Set 1:4 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What is the name of the largest penguin?
2. What do penguins feed on?
3. Write a question like the ones above. Write down the answer as well.  
**You must be able to find the answer in the report.**

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture to show how a penguin catches its food.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.**
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a penguin.
7. **Comic Strip**  
Make a comic strip about the life of a penguin. Use speech bubbles or captions.  
**Include some information from the report.**

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help penguins survive

8. **Information Web**  
Make a list of all the physical features of a penguin mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these features and the way it behaves helps it survive. Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : **PENGUINS** → very fast in water → can catch fish to eat

### EVALUATING - How safe is the penguin

9. **Predator Rating** - give the penguin a predator rating from 1 to 10  
**1 = no danger from predators      10 = very high danger from predators**  
Give a reason for your rating using information from the report and your own ideas.

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. **Penguin Upgrade**  
Make some changes to the penguin that would make it easier to survive in its habitat. You could make changes to
  - the way it protects its eggs
  - the way it protects itself from large sea predators (killer whales and sharks)
  - its body to protect it from oil spills in the sea**Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.**

# BIRDS of AFRICA



There are more than 2,300 different kinds of birds in Africa. All of them have feathers and wings and eggs.

Birds find a place to live (a habitat) which provides them with food, shelter and a place to have a family. Africa is a huge area with many different habitats. Ducks live on or beside lakes and rivers, ostriches on the grassy plains and sand larks in the desert.

Birds have special features that help them to find food and keep safe in the habitat they choose. They all have feathers and wings but not all of them fly. Their feathers are very strong and light. They protect the bird by keeping out the wind and rain. They keep them warm in cold places and at night. A bird's beak and feet help it too. An eagle's claws kill its food and its sharp beak tears off the meat. A wading bird's long legs and long bill stop its body from getting wet while it looks for food. All birds have very good eyes and ears which help them to find food and escape from other animals.

Most birds eat plants and insects. Some live mainly on meat. Many African birds are clever at finding food. One bird stands on the backs of large animals and finds small insects in their hair. The animals do not mind because they are being kept clean! Another bird will lead a badger to a bees' nest. When the badger breaks the nest open, the bird gets to eat the honey too.

Having babies is very important to make sure that the species doesn't die out. The mother bird lays eggs. The parents sit on them, keeping them warm until the babies hatch. Then they bring food to the babies. The parents care for them in the nest until they are able to care for themselves. Sometimes, just one parent looks after the eggs and babies but usually both parents do.

Because there are many creatures in Africa looking for food, parents must work hard to protect the young birds and themselves. Most birds live in groups. Some like living in pairs or alone.

Some African birds are becoming harder to find. This is because people are using the places where they live for making farms and building towns.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# BIRDS of AFRICA



## Set 2:1 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Name the three different birds mentioned in the report and where they live.
2. What do most birds eat?
3. Write two questions like the ones above and the answers.  
***You must be able to find the answers in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture to show how birds feed their babies.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.***
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. ***Poetry***  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a bird in Africa.
7. ***Comic Strip***  
Make a comic strip about African birds. Use speech bubbles or captions.  
***Include some information from the report.***

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help birds survive

8. ***Information Web***  
Make a list of the physical features and behaviours of African birds that are mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these things help them to survive. Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example :

**BIRDS**



feathers



keep out the wind and rain

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

9. ***The Ultimate African Bird***  
Design a new superbird that could live anywhere in Africa; in the desert, high in the mountains, and beside or in water.  
Draw this new creature and label all its useful features.  
You could include
  - What it eats and how it gets its food
  - A nest design which will keep out all predators***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***



# The FLAMINGO

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

Flamingoes are wading birds that live in large groups.

Shallow lakes that do not have lots of fish or too much vegetation are the perfect places for flamingoes to live. Many such places are found in east Africa. Flamingoes usually stay in the same place unless the habitat changes.

Flamingoes are well designed for the way they live. Their feet are webbed, making it easier for them to walk on wet mud, and are useful for stirring up food from the bottom of the lake. Their strong skinny legs allow them to wade through water without getting wet. They sleep standing up on one leg. They are able to change legs without waking up. Their long necks and large curved beaks are perfect for feeding.

Flamingoes eat small water animals. To catch these they wade through the water with their beaks on the surface facing backwards. They move their heads from side to side, taking in water. Tiny bits of food in the water stick to bristles in the mouths of the flamingoes. Then, they let out the water and swallow the food. The pink colour of their feathers comes from the food. The bright colour shows that they are healthy and well-fed.

These birds are very lively when it comes time to choose a mate. Large groups of birds run to and fro, pointing their necks and bills upwards. They jerk their heads about, calling and flapping their wings. After they have paired up, they make nests. These are piles of mud. The egg sits on the top. They have just one egg and take turns sitting on it for a month. The babies can step out of the nest after only two or three days!

Their enemies are sea eagles which fly down and take young birds without even landing. Other animals are always looking for birds that have strayed away from the group. In Africa, big cats will come looking for food in the muddy watery habitat if they are very hungry. Large python snakes will also attack.



Flamingoes are large birds but they have few defences other than flying away from danger. Living with lots of other flamingoes keeps them safe and happy. They make a lot of noise as they feed, fly and nest together.

There are millions of flamingos but the things people do can harm them. They and the places where they live need to be left alone.

# The FLAMINGO

## Set 2:2 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Where are you most likely to find flamingoes?
2. What are flamingoes well known for?
3. Write two questions like the ones above and the answers.  
***You must be able to find the answers in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture to show you understand how flamingoes feed.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.***
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a flamingo.
7. **Comic Strip**  
Make a comic strip about the life of a flamingo.  
***Use speech bubbles or captions and include information from the report.***

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the flamingo survive

8. **Information Web**  
Make a list of the physical features and behaviours of flamingoes that are mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these things help them to survive. Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

<b>FLAMINGOES</b>
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 → curved beak → good for catching food

### EVALUATING - How safe is the flamingo

9. **Predator Rating** - give the flamingo a predator rating from 1 to 10  
***1 = no danger from predators      10 = very high danger from predators***  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report and your own ideas.

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. **The flamingo has few defences against predators**  
Design some new features that will help flamingoes protect their young from eagle attacks and the danger from large snakes and hungry big cats.  
***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***

# The OSTRICH

The ostrich is the largest bird on earth. It is flightless.

These birds live wild on the plains of Africa. They like dry, open grassy places where there is plenty of room to move around. They do not need lots of trees to hide away from predators because of their size and their speed on the ground.

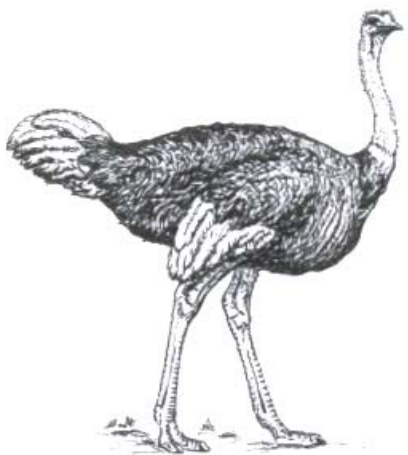
Their main food is plants: grass, seeds, flowers and fruits. They also eat insects and lizards. They graze alongside herd animals like zebras. They can go without drinking water for several days.

Ostriches have long powerful legs and small feet like the hooves on a horse. This means that they can run very fast on hard ground. Because they are so tall and have long necks they can see danger from a long way off. They also can hear really well. The dull colour of their feathers helps them to blend in with their surroundings.

For part of the year, ostriches live alone or in pairs. In the breeding season, small groups of females join up, led by a main hen. Male ostriches fight other males for a group of females. The winning male mates with the main hen. Ostrich eggs are the biggest eggs there are. The group of females has one nest for all of them. It is just a flat place on the ground with a raised edge of earth around it. There may be twenty eggs in it. The main hen sits on the eggs during the day. The male sits on them at night. After a month to six weeks, the eggs hatch. The parents use their wings to fan the chicks and shade them from the heat of the sun.

There are many hungry animals on the African plains. Eagles and foxes love ostrich eggs and chicks. Adult ostriches are attacked by larger animals such as cheetahs and lions, but they can usually outrun them. Sometimes

they will lie flat on the ground so that their bodies look like just a pile of dirt. If they are forced to fight, their kick can kill.



There are not as many wild ostriches as there used to be. However, they will not die out completely because they are farmed all over the world. They are farmed for their meat, skin and feathers.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The OSTRICH

## Set 2:3 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What is special about the ostrich?
2. What do ostriches eat?
3. Write two questions like the ones above and the answers.  
***You must be able to find the answers in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw pictures to show how an ostrich protects itself from danger.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.***
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of an ostrich.
7. **Comic Strip**  
Make a comic strip about the life of an ostrich.  
***Use speech bubbles or captions and include information from the report.***

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the ostrich survive

8. **Information Web**  
Make a list of all the physical features and behaviours of the ostrich that are mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these things help them to survive. Show your ideas on an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

<b>OSTRICH</b>
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 → long legs → can run away from danger

### EVALUATING - How safe is the ostrich

9. **Predator Rating** - give the ostrich a predator rating from 1 to 10  
**1 = no danger from predators      10 = very high danger from predators**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report and your own ideas.

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. **The ostrich can outrun its predators**  
Design a new predator that would make life difficult for the ostrich. Think about the features the predator would need and some cunning strategies it could use to be able to catch and kill ostriches.  
***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***

# The VULTURE

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

The vulture is a large bird that feeds from dead animals. In nature's plan, its job is to clean up the rubbish!

Several kinds of vulture live in Africa. They love to glide over the flat lands and mountains for hours on warm air flows. You will find them in many different habitats.

Vultures have some interesting features which help their lifestyle. They have hooked bills, powerful feet and sharp claws for tearing meat. They are large birds but they fly easily on long, wide wings. In the air, they are grand and graceful. On the ground they hop along awkwardly because their bodies are big and their feet are weak. They are either bald or have fuzzy feathers on their heads and long necks. This makes them look rather strange. They are not the cutest birds in the world!

All vultures have very good sight. They look for food as they soar. When they see a dead animal, they fly down and gather around it. They may have to wait until a larger animal such as a lion has finished feeding. Then they stamp and hiss at each other as they fight for food. There can be a hundred of them feeding from one body. It can get noisy!

Of course, walking on and feeding from rotting animals is filthy but these birds do not seem to get sick. Their stomachs contain powerful liquids that kill germs. Their strong urine kills bacteria on their feet and legs. Their bald heads and necks also help them to stay clean while poking around inside dead animals.

There are no animals that regularly hunt vultures. Large animals might occasionally surprise a vulture while it is feeding. Apart from that farmers kill them to protect their animals.

Vultures have the same mate for life. The pair will often return to the same nest every year. They build their nests in trees, in caves or on rocky cliffs. Their huge, messy nests

are made of sticks. There, the female lays her eggs. Both parents feed the baby birds. When they grow up and learn to fly, they too become nature's caretakers, just like their parents.

There are fewer vultures than there used to be. That is because there are more farms in Africa and not so many wild animals. They can still be very useful around villages to get rid of rubbish and this stops diseases from spreading.



# The VULTURE



## Set 2:4 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What sort of food does a vulture eat?
2. Why are vultures awkward on the ground?
3. Write two questions like the ones above and the answers.  
***You must be able to find the answers in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture to show why it is an advantage for the vulture to have a bald head and neck.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.***
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. ***Poetry***  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a vulture.
7. ***Comic Strip***  
Make a comic strip about the life of an vulture.  
***Use speech bubbles or captions and include information from the report.***

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the vulture survive

8. ***Information Web***  
Make a list of all the features and behaviours of the vulture that are mentioned in the report. Brainstorm how these things help them survive.  
Show your thinking as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : VULTURES → good eyesight → can see dead animals while they are flying

### EVALUATING - How safe is a vulture

9. ***Predator Rating*** - give the vulture a predator rating from 1 to 10  
***1 = no danger from predators      10 = very high danger from predators***  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report and your own ideas.

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. ***The vulture is nature's rubbish man***  
Think of a way that the city council could use vultures in cities to take care of some of our rubbish and leftover food. Design an advertisement to get people to make use of this new service.  
***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***

# BIRDS of AUSTRALIA



## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

Birds make up a big part of the animal kingdom. They are warm-blooded, lay eggs and have wings, although not all of them fly. The most important difference from other animals is that they have feathers. There are over eight hundred types of Australian birds. They range in size from very small finches (20 cms long) to large ground-dwellers that stand two metres tall.

Birds choose a place to live (a habitat) where there is enough food, the right sort of shelter from the weather and predators, and a good opportunity to find a mate and raise a family. Australia is a large country with many different habitats. Little penguins nest on the cool south coast, brightly-coloured parrots live in the tropical north and black swans live around the lakes and rivers all over Australia.

Birds have special features that help them survive. Being able to fly helps a lot when it comes to finding food and escaping from predators. Their feathers are light and especially designed for flying. They also protect them from the weather. Large birds that do not fly, like the emu, have very large strong legs and can run very fast. The design of a bird's feet and beak is very important. The cockatoo's strong curved beak is good for cracking seeds open. It can also use its gripping feet to bring food to its mouth. A pelican lives around water and can paddle well with its strong legs and webbed feet. Its large beak is used to scoop up the fish it eats. All birds have excellent sight. This helps them find food and avoid danger.

Because they are warm-blooded, birds need to eat a lot and often. Most birds eat plants and insects but there are some that prefer to eat meat. What a bird eats will affect when it hunts. Birds that eat mice usually hunt at night. Birds that eat bugs and worms hunt at dusk and dawn. Birds that eat seeds and plants spend most of the day looking for food. Birds can be very clever when it comes to finding food. Crows use small sticks, held in their beaks, as tools to get insects out of rotten logs. Australian eagles have been known to hunt in teams, herding groups of kangaroos in order to find a weak animal to kill.

As with all living things, having babies is very important to make sure the species doesn't die out. Many Australian birds have unusual ways of attracting mates. Male bowerbirds build roofed shelters and decorate them with flowers, nuts and fruits. The female chooses to mate with the male who has made the best one. She is making sure that her babies will be well fed and sheltered. Nests are varied and range from a pile of leaves under a bush to the fancy woven nests of the weaver birds. Whatever the nest is like, all birds lay eggs and keep them warm until the babies hatch. Most parents share duties, feeding and protecting the young birds. Sometimes, baby birds are looked after by just one parent.

Because there are many wild creatures looking for food, parents must be alert and ready to protect their babies and themselves. Most small birds live in small family groups or larger flocks where there is safety in numbers. Larger birds, especially ground-dwelling birds, tend to be shy and prefer to live alone or in pairs.



# BIRDS of AUSTRALIA



## Set 3:1 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. How many different types of birds are there in Australia?
2. List the three Australian habitats mentioned in the report.
3. Write three questions like the ones above and the answers.

***You must be able to find the answers in the report.***

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Show you understand these words from the report by writing down what the word means, using it in a sentence of your own, and drawing a picture with a caption.  
**range, predators, features, species, woven**
5. Draw a picture to show the clever way that crows get their food.  
***Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawing.***
6. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

7. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of an Australian bird.
8. **A Day in the Life of an Australian Bird**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a bird in Australia. You can do this by writing a bird story or as a bird comic strip with captions.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help birds survive

9. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of Australian birds mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help birds survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

<b>BIRDS</b>
--------------

 → strong feathers → protect them from weather

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

10. **The Ultimate Australian Bird**  
Design a new superbird that could easily survive anywhere in Australia. Draw this new creature and label all its useful features
  - Explain how it can survive in very hot and very cold habitats
  - Explain how it protects itself from being preyed upon by other animals***Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.***



# The CASSOWARY

The cassowary is a very large flightless bird related to the emu, the ostrich and the (extinct) moa. There are three types of cassowary. The one found in Australia is called the Southern Cassowary.

This is normally a very shy bird which lives alone and likes to stay hidden in the thick tropical rainforests and swamps of north-eastern Australia. It enjoys living in a warm climate where there are many different kinds of food. It will set up an area for feeding and defend this territory against other cassowaries. Because of this cassowaries need large areas of rainforest to spread out in. They roost on the ground when they sleep.

Cassowary mostly eat fruit that has fallen to the forest floor. They will also eat many other things such as flowers, insects, frogs, birds, fish, rats and mice. They will travel up to six kilometres a day looking for food.

A cassowary is an impressive sight. It has an unusual high, curved, horny ridge on top of its head, which can look a bit like a helmet. The skin of its head and long neck is mainly bright blue with bright orange, pink and purple patches. At the front of the neck, there are two long, drooping red pieces of skin (wattles). The rest of its large body is covered with long, thin, glossy black feathers that look a bit like hair. It can be as tall as two metres. This bird runs very fast, can jump high and swim well. Its wings are small and weak and not very useful for anything. It has strong legs with three huge claws on each foot. The middle claw is much longer than the others and is extremely sharp.

It is known as one of the world's most dangerous birds. If a cassowary is approached it will normally stand its ground rather than run away. If it feels cornered it will become very aggressive. It hisses, stretches tall and ruffles its feathers. The next step is to attack, running and leaping into the air feet first, slashing with its vicious claws. The middle claw on each foot can slash through metal so it can do a lot of damage when it attacks this way.

At nesting time, the female lays several large green eggs into a nest of leaves hidden deep in the forest. In contrast to most other birds, it is the male who makes the nest, sits on the eggs and cares for the chicks when they hatch. Protected by him, they stay around the nest for about nine months. After that the father chases them away and they have to find their own territory to live in.

Adult birds have no natural enemies although wild pigs can destroy their nests and eggs and also eat the food that the cassowaries



eat. But it is contact with man that has caused most of the problems. The cassowary has lost almost 80% of its habitat because so much of the forest has been cleared. Roads through the forest split up the bird's territories and many are killed crossing roads. Also people living close by their habitats often own dogs which chase and kill young cassowary.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The CASSOWARY

## Set 3:2 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Where do cassowaries sleep at night?
2. What is different about the cassowary's feathers?
3. Write three questions like the ones above and the answers.  
*You must be able to find the answers in the report.*

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture, or a diagram, to show how a cassowary behaves when it feels threatened.  
*Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.*
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Cassowary Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
*A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.*
7. **A Day in the Life of a Cassowary**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a cassowary. You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the cassowary as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the cassowary survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the cassowary mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the animal to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : **CASSOWARY** → claws like daggers → can defend itself

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Danger Rating** - Using the information in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Checking the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the cassowary (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least two sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to check.  
10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Cassowary Upgrade - making life easier**
  - Make some changes so that cassowaries don't get run over by cars on the roads that have been built through their habitat
  - Redesign the cassowary's nest so that pigs can't get at their eggs*Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.*

# The KOOKABURRA

The kookaburra is the largest member of the kingfisher family (30-40cm long) and is native to Australia. There are several different kinds of kookaburra.

Kookaburras are good-looking birds. They could even be called cute with dark bands across their eyes (like a Zorro mask) and the spiky feathers on top of their head which makes them look a bit 'punk'! They have quite large heads and strong solid beaks. Their markings vary but most of them have a light-coloured body and darker wings. Kookaburras are best known for their call, which sounds like a crazy human laugh. It is also known as 'The Bushman's Alarm Clock' because that loud, cackling noise would wake up anyone in the morning! However, the kookaburras' cries are very important. They use them to announce their territorial boundaries to each other.

These birds can be found widely throughout Australia. They are very easy to please: they like living in forests, swamps, woodlands, farms and in many backyard gardens of Australian towns and cities. They are not a bird that is in danger of dying out. In some places, they are regarded as a pest.

Although kookaburras belong to the kingfisher family, they rarely catch fish. They will perch and wait for something tasty to come along then dive down on it. Their normal food includes lizards, snakes, insects, worms, mice and small birds. They catch their prey in their large, strong beak and bash it against a rock, a tree or even a fence post. This is not only to kill the prey but also to break its bones, making it easier to swallow (they swallow their food whole) and digest. They have also been known to grab meat from back-yard barbeques, even when it is hot!

Kookaburras nest in hollow trees which makes it hard for predators to get their eggs and chicks. If there is not quite enough room for their nest, they will peck at the tree and enlarge the area. They normally have four or five eggs which are speckled and blue-green in colour. They are very protective parents. Although a chick can fly and feed itself within two months of being born, it will stay with its parents for about four years. This means that older brothers and sisters are present to help raise the new babies too.

Larger birds like eagles, hawks and owls hunt kookaburras. Because kookaburras are not great flyers, they rely on their good eyesight and blending in with the surroundings to avoid their enemies. When in danger they will fluff themselves up to make themselves look bigger and scarier than they are. They also use their call to protect their families. The whole family will join in and call together making an enormous racket. They are sometimes caught by four-footed predators such as cats and foxes but these animals can usually find food that is easier to catch.



Most kookaburras live in social groups where all the adults help raise the babies. This is quite unusual behaviour for birds.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The KOOKABURRA

## Set 3:3 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What are kookaburras best known for?
2. How long do the young kookaburras stay with their parents?
3. Write three questions like the ones above and the answers.

**You must be able to find the answers in the report.**

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw pictures or diagrams to show how the kookaburra hunts, catches and eats its prey.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.**
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Kookaburra Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
**A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.**
7. **A Day in the Life of a Kookaburra**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a kookaburra. You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the kookaburra as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the kookaburra survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the kookaburra mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the animal to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : **KOOKABURRA** → a loud call → warn each other when there is danger

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Danger Rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Checking the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the kookaburra (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least two sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to check.

10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Kookaburra Upgrade - making life easier**
  - Make some changes so that the kookaburra doesn't have to worry about eagles, hawks, and owls any more
  - Design a really safe nest for the kookaburra in a hollow tree**Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.**

# The LYREBIRD

The lyrebird is one of Australia's best known native birds. There are two different types of lyrebird.

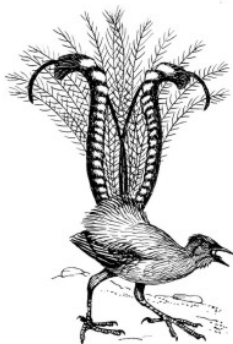
The lyrebird is a medium-sized bird and is well designed for ground dwelling. It has a small head and long, strong legs for moving quickly around the forest floor. Its body is a dull brown or grey which helps it blend into the forest. The female has a long brown tail that trails behind her but the lyrebird is remembered because of the male's tail which is extremely beautiful. It has sixteen feathers and is about one metre long. The two outer feathers of this tail are golden brown, curved and striped. This curved shape reminds people of a musical instrument – the lyre. The other remarkable thing about the lyrebird is that it can copy perfectly any sound it hears. It can remember the songs of up to twenty other kinds of birds. These days, they have been heard copying the sounds of car alarms, crying babies and even the sound of a chain saw!

These birds are found in wet rainforests. Because they are not great flyers, they live on the damp, leafy forest floor where there is plenty of food. At night, however, they do fly up to roost in low trees.

Lyrebirds spend most of the day scratching at the forest floor to find food. They use their strong claws to tear apart rotting wood and turn over rocks to find insects, snails, spiders, worms and sometimes seeds to eat.

When trying to attract females, the male tramples down the undergrowth to make a space in the forest, or builds a mound of dirt. This is his 'stage' where he dances. He spreads his tail forward over his head and shakes it, jumping, bouncing and swaying from side to side. Using his memory bank of sounds, the male sings an amazing courtship song. How could any female resist his song and dance? The female builds her own nest in an old tree trunk, a cave or on a pile of rocks. It is a round, twiggy nest with a hidden side entrance which helps to protect the eggs from other hungry animals. She lays a single egg and brings up her chick alone.

Lyrebirds are shy and will run away from danger. They rely on thick undergrowth in the forest to hide. They can use their wings to fly onto low branches and rocks and can glide for short distances. They also use the strange sounds they can make to frighten off their enemies: larger birds, dogs and wild cats.



Usually, lyrebirds are found alone or in pairs. At times, they will be found together in small numbers especially when they are young.

These birds were once in danger of dying out but now they are protected by law. It is very important to protect their forests. If the trees were cut down, these interesting birds would soon die out.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The LYREBIRD

## Set 3:4 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Where do lyrebirds like to live?
2. How many feathers are there in a male lyrebird's tail?
3. Write three questions like the ones above and the answers.

*You must be able to find the answers in the report.*

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture, or a diagram, to show how male lyrebirds attract females.  
*Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.*
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Lyrebird Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
*A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.*
7. **A Day in the Life of a Lyrebird**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a lyrebird.  
You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the lyrebird as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the lyrebird survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the lyrebird mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the animal to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example :

LYREBIRD



fancy feathers



attract mates

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **How safe are these birds** - Give the lyrebird a 1 to 10 rating.  
**1 = hard for predators to catch - survival is easy**  
**10 = easy for predators to catch - very hard to survive**  
Give reasons for your rating using what you have learnt from the report.
10. **Checking the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the lyrebird (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least 2 sources of information that you have found.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to check.  
10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Lyrebird Upgrade - making life easier**
  - Make some changes so that the lyrebird doesn't have to spend all day scratching on the forest floor to find insects, spiders, snails and worms. How can you get the food to come to the lyrebird.
  - Design a new 'show' for the lyrebird male that will really get the attention of the female lyrebirds. Remember that they are able to copy any sound. How could they use that?*Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.*



# BIRDS of NORTH AMERICA



## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

Birds are one of the main groups in the animal kingdom. They are warm-blooded, have a beak with no teeth, lay hard-shelled eggs and most can fly. The thing that makes birds different from other animal groups is that they all have feathers. North America is home to over nine hundred species of wild birds.

Birds live in the habitat that suits them best. They need a good food supply, shelter from the weather and predators, and the chance to find a mate and raise a family. North America has a huge variety of habitats to choose from. For example, water birds such as swans and ducks can be found in lakes, rivers and ponds all over the continent. The hot desert is home to birds such as the roadrunner which is not bothered by having little water to drink. Many North American birds vary their habitats by migrating. They fly south in autumn and spend the cold winter months in warmer places with lots of food. In spring, they return to the north and spend the summer bringing up their chicks.

All birds have special physical features that help them to survive. Being able to fly and having excellent eyesight and hearing helps birds find food and escape from predators. Their feathers are very strong and cover their bodies in layers, protecting them from the cold and wet but also from the sun. Birds' beaks and feet help them capture food and are designed for the habitat they live in. The ptarmigan, which lives in the arctic all year round, has feathers covering its feet and legs which become like snowshoes in winter; it can walk on snow without sinking. Oystercatchers are coastal birds that have a very long thick bill which is strong enough to pry shellfish from rocks and force them open.

Birds need to find lots of food every day. Being warm-blooded means that they are always breaking down the food they eat into heat energy. Small birds are not good at storing fat so they need to be eating all the time. Some birds eat more than half their own body weight every day.

Most birds eat plants and insects although some prefer meat. Birds have developed clever ways of finding their food. Some just steal it! The Blue Jay raids eggs and chicks from other bird's nests. Some lure their food. Burrowing owls line their nests with cow manure to attract dung beetles and then eat them. Some work as a team. Harris hawks hunt together, ambushing and killing their food.

However, no matter how much food a bird has, it must reproduce itself or the species will die out. All birds mate, build nests and lay eggs. Where the nests are depends on the habitat and the lifestyle of the bird. Waxwings nest high in pine trees, coots among waterside reeds and plovers on the arctic tundra. Typically, both parents help incubate the eggs and feed the young birds once they hatch. However, this does not always happen. Some species of cuckoo lay eggs in other birds' nests, leaving the parent duties to them!

Survival also depends on the bird's ability to escape being caught and eaten by animals further up the food chain. There are many predators in North America including snakes, wolves, coyotes, foxes, bobcats and other birds. All birds are constantly on the alert for danger. They cock their heads from side to side because they can only see with one eye at a time. They can also hear very well and take flight if startled. It is common for birds to live together in small or large flocks. This satisfies their need for company and helps them to survive because there is safety in numbers. This is especially true for migratory birds which travel hundreds or thousands of kilometres together.

# BIRDS of NORTH AMERICA



## Set 4:1 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. How many species of wild birds are there in North America?
2. Where does the ptarmigan live?
3. Write four questions like the ones above, and the answers.

**You must be able to find the answers in the report.**

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Show you understand these words from the report by writing down what the word means, using it in a sentence of your own, and drawing a picture with a caption.  
**species, coastal, lure, manure, migratory**
5. Draw a picture or diagram to show how the oystercatcher uses its beak to get food.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.**
6. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

7. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about North American birds.
8. **A Day in the Life of a North American Bird**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a bird in North America. You can do this by writing a bird story, a bird diary, or a bird comic strip with speech bubbles.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help birds survive

9. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of North American birds mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help birds survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

BIRDS
-------

 → can fly → escape predators

### CREATING - Making improvements

10. **The Ultimate North American Bird**  
Design a new superbird that could survive in any habitat in North America from the arctic to the desert.  
Draw this new creature and label all its useful features.  
Here are some ideas to get you started ...
  - modifications that would allow it to survive in very hot and very cold habitats
  - an all-weather, predator-proof nest to reduce the loss of eggs and young

**Remember to include pictures and labels to explain your interesting ideas.**



# The BALD EAGLE



The Bald Eagle is a bird of prey belonging to the Fish Eagle or Sea Eagle family.

Bald Eagles are big, powerful birds. Their heads are stark white (not featherless as you might expect) and so are their broad tails. Otherwise, they are a beautiful brownish-grey in colour. They have yellow feet and beaks. When mature, most of their legs are feathered. In all, they have about 7,000 feathers on their bodies. These layers of strong, light feathers allow them to survive in very cold environments. Another important feature is their sensational eyesight. Eagle eyes are almost as big as human eyes but they are able to see four times better. This means that eagles can see possible prey from a long way away. Their fierce stare looks aggressive but noble. Their cry is rather like a gull's but they also chirp and whistle to communicate with each other.

Fish, especially salmon, is one of their main foods although Bald Eagles will eat whatever is available to them. As birds of prey, they are skilled and magnificent hunters. They use their strong, sharp talons to kill. They can swoop down and pluck a fish out of the water, catch a hare on the run or seize another bird in mid-air! They catch rabbits, rodents, snakes, and ducks and have been known to kill foxes and even wolves. They can carry prey of up to two kilograms back to their chicks. If food is scarce, they will happily eat animals that are already dead.

Naturally, Bald Eagles live near the coasts, lakes or rivers. They are found only in North America from Alaska and Canada down to northern Mexico. Half of all Bald Eagles live in Alaska. They prefer quiet, isolated places with tall trees and clean water. Mountainous country suits them because there they can soar on the air currents swirling around the mountains. They do migrate, not because of the cold but to find better food supplies during the winter.

Bald Eagles mate for life. They build massive nests in tall trees or on high rocky cliffs. They often return to the same nest every year. A nesting pair claims a territory of about three or four square kilometres around the nest and defends it vigorously. They will have between one and three eggs which they incubate for a month. Then, the parents are kept busy protecting and supplying food for their chicks. The chicks must also be encouraged to fly and taught to hunt. By the time they are three or four months old, they can look after themselves.

Except when they are nesting, Bald Eagles enjoy roosting and hunting together. They will gather on beaches, at river mouths and along river banks in order to fish.

They are at the top of the food chain and have no predators except man. However, squirrels, ravens and gulls will eat their eggs if a parent does not stay on the nest. For about forty years, the Bald Eagle was endangered. It was shot by farmers protecting their stock, killed when entangled with power lines, poisoned, and run over by motor vehicles. Since 2007, when it was taken off the Endangered Species List, it has remained a protected species. Today, the population of Bald Eagles is stable.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The BALD EAGLE

## Set 4:2 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What is the Bald Eagle's favourite food?
2. What sounds does the Bald Eagle make?
3. Write four questions like the ones above and the answers.

*You must be able to find the answers in the report.*

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture, or a diagram, to show why the Bald Eagle likes to live in the mountains.  
*Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.*
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Bald Eagle Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
*A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.*
7. **A Day in the Life of a Bald Eagle**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a Bald Eagle. You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the Bald Eagle as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help Bald Eagles survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the Bald Eagle mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the bird to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

<b>BALD EAGLES</b>
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 → layers of feathers → can live in cold places

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Vulnerability rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Verifying the information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the Bald Eagle (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least three sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.

10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Bald Eagle Upgrade - overcoming natural and man-made threats**  
Make some adaptations to the physical features of the Bald Eagle and the way it behaves so that these birds have a better chance of survival in their habitat.  
This might include
  - Better equipment for fighting off predators
  - Modifications so that different food can be caught and eaten
  - Improvements to provide better protection for eggs and chicks*Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.*

# The CANADA GOOSE



The Canada Goose is a common North American water bird. There are many types of this goose which are alike but differ in size.

They are native to arctic and temperate North America although they have been introduced in other parts of the world.

They enjoy living in watery areas that are surrounded by open country. They can be found at lakes, river mouths and coastal swamps.

The Canada Goose is a large, handsome bird. Its head and long neck are black and it has a wide white band under its chin. Its plump body is brownish-grey. It has webbed feet which are good for swimming and for walking on wet or muddy ground. It can fly steadily for hours during its long migrations. It makes a loud honking sound. The male, called a gander, is slightly larger than the female, called a goose.

This strong-looking bird loves to eat plants, mainly young green vegetation, tender shoots and roots. Its bill is designed for holding and tearing blades of grass with a jerk of its head. It will graze for hours on grassy areas and eat available grains from fields. On the water it also likes small insects and fish.

Canada Geese are very family-oriented. They find a mate when they are about three years old and stay with this mate faithfully. The female lays her eggs in a reed nest lined with grass and feathers. The goose will pull downy feathers from her own breast for this. Both parents sit on the nest during the incubation time although it is usually the female, with the male standing guard. During this time, they moult, losing their flight feathers. They cannot fly away until they grow new ones. This is nature's way of ensuring that they will be there until the chicks hatch, 25-30 days later. In fact, they are very devoted parents. Both of them protect and care for the babies, called goslings. As the goslings grow, they join up with others and form small groups called crèches which are always looked after by a few adults. Adult geese can be aggressive, hissing at and chasing an attacker. In the autumn the young geese are able to migrate south for the winter with their parents.

Geese are very social. They like living in large flocks. If one of them is attacked, a number of others will group together to fight off the danger. Their huge migrations are part of flock life. They take place twice a year. In the autumn, thousands of these birds fly south from Canada to the warmer areas of the United States. Some even go to Mexico. In the spring, they will fly back north in time for the new season of growth. They learn the flight paths from their parents. By flying in a V-formation, a slip-stream is created which makes flying easier, except for the lead bird. Older birds take turns flying in the lead.

Many predators, including man, kill Canada Geese. They are protected by law but it is legal to shoot them in the hunting season if you have a licence. Also, dogs, racoons, foxes, owls and weasels will attack them or their babies and try to steal their eggs. However, Canada Geese fight back, especially when protecting the goslings.

Canada Geese used to be endangered but now they are very numerous. This can cause problems. Some people call them pests because of the large amount of faeces a flock of geese produces every day. This can pollute waterways. They can also be a danger near airports. It was a flock of Canada Geese that flew into the engines of an American aeroplane, causing an emergency landing in the Hudson River.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.

(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The CANADA GOOSE

## Set 4:3 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. How often do Canada Geese migrate each year?
2. Where do Canada Geese go to when they migrate?
3. Write four questions like the ones above and the answers.  
*You must be able to find the answers in the report.*

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture, or pictures, to show why the Canada Geese fly in V-formation.  
*Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.*
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Canada Goose Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
*A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.*
7. **A Day in the Life of a Canada Goose**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a Canada Goose. You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the Canada Goose as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help Canada Geese survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the Canada Goose mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the bird to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example :

**CANADA GOOSE**

→ flies in V-formation → help each other out

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Vulnerability Rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Verifying the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the Canada Goose (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least three sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.

10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Canada Goose Upgrade - overcoming natural and man-made threats**  
Make some adaptations to the physical features of the Canada Goose and the way it behaves so that these birds have a better chance of survival in their habitat.  
This might include
  - Better equipment for fighting off predators
  - Modifications so that different food can be caught and eaten
  - Improvements to provide better protection for eggs and chicks*Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.*

# The TURKEY



The turkey is a kind of poultry related to the chicken. It is the ancestor of the domesticated turkey which is farmed as a popular food for the American market.

Turkeys live wild in the forests, woodlands and open grasslands of the United States and Canada. They love to roam in wide open spaces when feeding but they also need ground-level vegetation where they can hide and woodlands or forests where they can roost in trees at night. Sometimes they will move into farms to feed from crops.

They live mainly on the ground and are not great flyers, relying on their speed and their ability to hide. They have very strong legs and can run at over thirty kilometres per hour. Their feathers are dark colours with shades of gold and green, which makes for great forest camouflage. They will fly up into trees at night to roost on low branches. They have great eyesight during the day but are inactive at night because they don't see well in the dark. While the rest of their body is covered in feathers they have a rather odd-looking neck and head. It has bare skin with a pink, fleshy wattle which hangs under their beaks and another fleshy piece, called a snout, hanging over the top of the beak.

Turkeys spend their day foraging for seeds, nuts, grains, wild berries, insects, frogs, lizards and snails. They use their powerful feet and claws to scratch the ground then peck up the seeds and insects that they find. They feed together and move as a flock. They have no teeth, of course, but instead have a powerful gizzard (part of the stomach) which grinds up the food.

Turkeys are known as a prey species, which means they are highly vulnerable and food for many predators on the lookout for an easy lunch. This includes snakes, crows, opossums, raccoons, rats, dogs, coyotes, hawks and owls. Only about half the eggs make it to hatching and only about 30% of the young turkeys that do hatch survive. In addition, adult turkeys may be taken by larger predators such as bobcats, wolves and eagles. Although they are slimmer than farmed turkeys, wild turkeys are prized as game birds because of their large bodies and are hunted by humans.

To ensure that some make it through to adulthood, the female turkey lays a large number of eggs during the breeding season; between nine and twelve although it can be as many as eighteen. She sits on them for almost a month before they hatch. During mating, the male turkey attracts females by puffing up his body, fluffing his feathers and spreading his tail in a beautiful semi-circular fan shape. He struts around shaking his feathers and making the 'gobble gobble' sound. Apparently this works for turkeys and the female is impressed by the show! However, the male will have nothing to do with the chicks when they arrive. It is up to the female to prepare a shallow nest in the forest, perhaps under a bush or in other thick foliage.

Unless it is mating season, females live in a small flock of females and males in a small flock of males. Young turkeys flock with their mothers. There is a pecking order in these flocks. Usually, the older and bigger birds are dominant over the younger and smaller ones.

In the past, Native Americans caught turkeys for food and feathers. However, they thought of turkeys as 'starvation food'. European settlers, on the other hand, caught and ate so many of them that by the early twentieth century, wild turkeys were hard to find. Because some people fought so hard for their survival, wild turkeys are now numerous once again.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph.  
(see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The TURKEY

## Set 4:4 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What does a wild turkey need in its habitat?
2. Make a list of the food that turkeys eat.
3. Write four questions like the ones above and the answers.

*You must be able to find the answers in the report.*

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture, or pictures, to show how a turkey finds food.  
*Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.*
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Wild Turkey Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
*A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.*
7. **A Day in the Life of a Wild Turkey**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a wild turkey. You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the turkey as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help turkeys survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the wild turkey mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the bird to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

TURKEY
--------

 → powerful feet → dig up insects and seeds

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Vulnerability Rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Verifying the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the wild turkey (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least three sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.

10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Turkey Upgrade - overcoming natural and man-made threats**  
Make some adaptations to the physical features of the turkey and the way it behaves so that these birds have a better chance of survival in their habitat. This might include
  - Better equipment for fighting off predators
  - Modifications so that different food can be caught and eaten
  - Improvements to provide better protection for eggs and chicks*Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.*

# BIRDS of the AMAZON



Birds are one of the main groups in the animal kingdom. They are warm-blooded, lay eggs, and have wings, although not all of them fly. The most obvious feature that distinguishes birds from other classifications of animals is that they all have feathers. The Amazon rainforest is the home for 1,600 diverse species of birds, about one third of all known bird species.

Birds live in the habitat that suits them best, somewhere where there is a good source of food, the right sort of shelter from the weather and predators, a significant population of the species to be able to find a mate and enough space to raise a family. The constant warmth and moisture of the Amazon rainforest results in a plentiful food supply and makes this a very favourable habitat where bird life can flourish. You will find different birds at all levels of the rainforest canopy, from ground-dwellers who live on the forest floor and feed from the teeming insect population to toucans feeding from fruit and seeds high up in the forest canopy.

All birds have special physical features that help them to survive. For birds, their ability to fly and their excellent hearing and eyesight are huge advantages when gathering food and evading predators. Flight is possible because of their very lightweight skeletons and their unique feathers. These feathers are also layered to protect them from both rain and sun and keep them warm at night. Birds' beaks and feet are their tools for capturing food. In the Amazon rainforest, the hummingbird's long slender beak is perfect for reaching deep into flowers and obtaining nectar. The Harpy Eagle's sharp curved beak is ideal for tearing the meat from the prey that it has caught and killed with its strong claws. The parrot's strong beak is perfect for cracking seeds open and is also used like an additional limb to help its four-toed feet to climb.

Day-to-day survival for birds is dependent on them having access to a continual supply of food. Being warm-blooded means that birds have to maintain their body at a constant temperature. They do this by breaking down the food they eat into heat energy. Flying also uses up a lot of energy. Birds eat a combination of plants and insects but larger birds of prey prefer mainly meat. Unlike mammals small birds are not able to store large fat reserves to keep themselves going. As a result, some birds need to eat more than half their body weight of food every day. Many birds will die if there is an unexpected spell of cold weather.

No matter how much food a bird has, unless it reproduces itself and maintains its population, the species will eventually die out. The beautiful plumage of many birds is there to attract a mate. Many birds have complicated courtship rituals which help them find the strongest, healthiest partner which in turn means their offspring have the best chance of survival. Once a pair of birds has mated they generally stay together throughout the season. Nests are built, eggs are laid and the parents take turns at incubating them. When the eggs hatch, it becomes a full-time job to feed and protect the hungry chicks until they can find food for themselves.

Survival also depends on the bird's ability to escape predation from animals further up the food chain. Small species of birds are always in danger of being attacked by larger birds of prey: owls, hawks, and eagles. However, because they can fly, birds can usually escape the unwanted attentions of large four-legged, ground-dwelling predators. A bigger threat comes from snakes, jaguars, weasels, monkeys and other birds who will target their eggs and chicks.

Different birds have developed ingenious ways of protecting themselves and their young. Oropendulas build their long, woven, hanging nests close to the nests of stinging insects such as wasps and bees. This discourages predators. Parakeets make their nests in deserted termite mounds, tunnelling to the centre of them and thus making an 'invisible' and well-protected nest. Small and medium-sized birds enjoy flocking, roosting, feeding and nesting together, finding safety in numbers and warning each other of approaching danger.

However, the most dangerous threat of all comes from man's activity in the Amazon rainforest. Deforestation by humans has meant that twenty percent of the original forest has disappeared and the rest will be gone in just forty years if policies and practices do not change. Destroying the forest means destroying the ecosystems and food chains within it. Some birds are extinct already and many more are endangered.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)



# BIRDS of the AMAZON



## Set 5:1 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. How many species of birds live in the Amazon Basin?
2. What do birds look for in a habitat?
3. Write four questions like the ones above and the answers.  
**You must be able to find the answers in the report.**

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Show you understand these words from the report by writing down what the word means, using it in a sentence of your own, and drawing a picture with a caption.  
**classifications, diverse, teeming, ritual, ingenious**
5. Draw a diagram to show you understand why a bird needs a constant supply of food.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.**
6. Decide on a heading for one paragraph of the report .  
Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head).  
Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

7. **Poetry**  
Write a poem or a rap song about the life of a bird living in the Amazon.
8. **A Day in the Life of a Bird in the Amazon**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of an Amazon bird.  
You can do this by writing a bird story, a bird diary, or a bird comic strip with speech bubbles or captions. Try to include as many bird facts as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help birds survive

9. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of Amazon birds mentioned in the report.  
Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the birds to survive.  
Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : **AMAZON BIRDS** → beautiful plumage → attract a mate for breeding

### CREATING - Making improvements

10. **The Ultimate Amazon Bird**  
Design a new superbird that would have an even better chance of surviving in the Amazon.  
Draw this new creature and label all its useful features and describe the way it behaves.  
Here are some ideas to get you started ...
  - modifications that would make it predator-proof - no other living thing could harm it
  - modifications (beak and feet) so that it can eat anything**Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.**



# The HOATZIN

The hoatzin (pronounced wätzēn [Aztec]) is a mysterious bird in a category all on its own. It has been called 'unique', 'enigmatic', 'special' and 'weird'. Because some of its characteristics are so unusual, scientists are uncertain of its origin and relationship to other birds.

Hoatzins live in tropical swampy areas. Their ideal habitat is slow-moving or standing water such as mangrove swamps, flooded forests, or oxbow lakes (which are formed when rivers change their course and the former river channels become isolated). They like the hot, humid climate of the lowland Amazon Basin.

Hoatzins are very social birds and live together in large groups. They are also very territorial. Every bird from a particular colony will defend its territory loudly, chasing away intruders with a hoarse croaking cry, screeches and hisses, even engaging in mid-air fights. They are most active in the morning and evening whereas during the day they hide away in the thick foliage to escape the heat.

These birds are strange and exotic. They look like mythical birds because of their dark red eyes, bright blue faces and the large spiky crests of feathers on their heads. They are about the size of a pheasant, and have small heads, long necks and beautiful earthy-coloured feathers which camouflage them well. They have dark tails of long white-tipped feathers. They do fly but not for long distances, as it requires a lot of effort and they are clumsy in the air. Rather, they prefer to jump and scramble about in the branches of the trees they live in, using their long, heavy tails and large wings for balancing.

One of the strangest things about the hoatzin is that it is a total vegetarian. It eats leaves, fruit and flowers. Accordingly, its digestive system is more like a cow's than a bird's! It has a sac in its gullet where microbes break down the vegetable matter that it has swallowed. The food then progresses to a second area for further digestion. The hoatzin can find food everywhere around it in the lush rainforest and, unlike most other birds, can spend hours roosting and relaxing while its food digests. The disadvantage of this is the strong, unpleasant, musky smell that is evident all around the bird and gives it the nickname 'Stinkbird'.

The birds breed in the rainy season. They make their nests on low or mid-level branches in trees that overhang water. There can be up to thirty nests in a single tree. They can have between one and six eggs although two is usual, and the incubation period is about a month. Other hoatzin, apart from the breeding pair, will help to incubate the eggs. The nests are large, made of dry sticks and are somewhat loose and scruffy-looking. This is often because a new nest is built on top of a previous one. Hoatzin chicks stay in the nest for only two or three weeks. They are born with two claws on each wing. With the help of these to grip, the chicks can scramble out along branches while they are still fairly young. They use an amazing escape strategy if a predator, such as a tree snake, approaches the nest. The chick will drop down into the water below and swim underwater to safety using both its feet and its wings. Later, with the help of its wing claws, it will scramble back up to the nest using an instinctive sense of direction. As the chick matures and learns to fly, its claws diminish and it can no longer swim.



Besides snakes, other predators of the hoatzin are tayras (a type of weasel), monkeys, and large birds of prey such as falcons, hawks and eagles. Tayras and monkeys, in particular, will target the eggs and young chicks still in the nest. However, potential predators are discouraged by the putrid smell of the adult bird.

Humans have been known to hunt hoatzins for their meat but only if desperate. They are not a popular source of food because of their foul smell. Although Hoatzins are not endangered, their habitat, the Amazonian rainforest, is continually being encroached upon for other human activities.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The HOATZIN

## Set 5:2 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Why does the hoatzin have a strong unpleasant smell?
2. When do these birds breed?
3. Write four questions like the ones above and the answers.

*You must be able to find the answers in the report.*

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture, or pictures, to show how a baby hoatzin escapes from a tree snake.  
*Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.*
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Hoatzin Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
*A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.*
7. **A Day in the Life of a Hoatzin**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a hoatzin.  
You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the hoatzin as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the hoatzin survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the hoatzin mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the bird to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example :

**HOATZIN**



bad smell



discourages predators

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Vulnerability rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Verifying the information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the hoatzin (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least three sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.  
10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Hoatzin Upgrade - overcoming natural and man-made threats**  
Make some adaptations to the physical features of the hoatzin and the way it behaves so that these birds are less vulnerable to threats and more competitive with other species. Here are some ideas to get you started ...
  - Better equipment and strategies for fighting off and avoiding predators
  - Modifications so that different food can be caught and eaten
  - Improvements to provide better protection for eggs and chicks*Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.*

# The SCARLET IBIS

The scarlet ibis is a large tropical wading bird and is related to the heron.

It lives in Central America, parts of the West Indies and in northern South America. It can be found where shallow water (either fresh or salt) provides it with its perfect environment: mangrove swamps, lagoons, mudflats, coastal areas, rivers and lakes. The Amazon rainforest is an ideal habitat for the scarlet ibis.

True to its name, the mature bird is a vibrant scarlet colour except for its black-tipped wing feathers. Young birds are brown with white stomachs. Gradually, as they mature, they gain red feathers until by three years old, they are totally covered in the beautiful deep red that is so impressive. The ibis has a long, slender, curved beak especially designed for food collection. Its long, thin legs are perfect for keeping its body out of the water as it wades and its partially-webbed feet means it can perch as well as wade. It will roost in trees at night in large groups.

Like other wading birds, the scarlet ibis forages for food by wading in shallow water, working its bill through the soft sand beneath. It has been seen waving its head from side to side so that its bill can touch on possible prey. Its brilliant colour originates from the pigment carotene that is present in shrimps, crabs and lobsters, its favourite foods. It will also probe grass and mud, eating worms, snails, frogs and insects.

Groups of scarlet ibis are a striking sight as they feed and fly together in large groups. They fly with their necks extended, often flapping for a few strokes and then gliding. They can fly quite high and as fast as forty kilometres per hour. They sometimes fly in a V-formation especially if flying home together from their feeding grounds to their roosting area, which could be some distance. They look like brilliant red flowers as they roost in trees in large flocks. Juvenile ibis flock together separately for two or three years until sexually mature.

These birds nest together in huge, dense colonies with maybe a hundred nests in close proximity. This probably discourages predators. The male ibis goes to great lengths to attract a mate: aerial flying displays, shaking, head-rubbing, gentle bill-snapping and honking. He also changes colour at this time, becoming even more vivid, especially his legs, face and bill. The female will flirt, showing the side of her face to the male in bowing movements.

Both of them will participate in making their nest. Usually, the male gathers the material and the female does the construction. The nest, a loose structure of sticks and other vegetation, is built above water. Three to five pale green, brown-speckled eggs are laid which are incubated by both parents for approximately twenty days. Then, they care for the young, feeding them by regurgitation. The parent with food will grab the chick's beak so that it lifts its head and then the food is regurgitated into its mouth. After two months, the chick leaves the nest although the parents still care for it for another few weeks until it is able to look after itself completely. The parents can be very aggressive when defending their breeding territory and will fight with beak, legs and wings to protect themselves and their offspring.

Dangerous predators include snakes (some climb trees and some swim), crocodiles and large cats. Sometimes, young birds fall from their nests into the water and are eaten by the local crocodiles, called cayman. Man also collects ibis eggs and kills the adult birds. The ibis will fly away if threatened except when defending its young.



Generally speaking, the beautiful scarlet ibis is not an endangered species. It is a protected bird everywhere and is the honoured national symbol in Trinidad and Tobago. However, in the Amazon, the law is not always able to be strictly enforced. Locals still kill the ibis for its feathers and for food. Habitat destruction is always a serious concern. Mangrove swamp areas, including the historic nesting sites of the scarlet ibis, are being cleared to improve fishing.

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

# The SCARLET IBIS

## Set 5:3 ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. Why is this bird called a scarlet ibis?
2. What is the main thing a scarlet ibis looks for in a habitat?
3. Write four questions like the ones above, and the answers.

**You must be able to find the answers in the report.**



### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture or a diagram showing that you understand where a scarlet ibis sleeps at night.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.**
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph.  
Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head).  
Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Scarlet Ibis Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
**A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.**
7. **A Day in the Life of a Scarlet Ibis**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a scarlet ibis.  
You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the scarlet ibis as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the scarlet ibis survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the scarlet ibis mentioned in the report.  
Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the bird to survive.  
Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

SCARLET IBIS
--------------

 → nest in colonies → safety in numbers

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Vulnerability Rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Verifying the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the scarlet ibis (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least four sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.

10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

11. **Scarlet Ibis Upgrade - overcoming natural and man-made threats**  
Make some adaptations to the physical features of the scarlet ibis and the way it behaves so that these birds are less vulnerable to threats and more competitive with other species.  
Here are some ideas to get you started ...
  - Better equipment and strategies for fighting off and avoiding predators
  - Modifications so that different food can be caught and eaten
  - Improvements to provide better protection for eggs and chicks**Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.**

# The TOUCAN

## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

There are approximately forty species of toucan, at least fifteen of which live in the Amazon rainforest. Of all the birds there (and there are many) toucans are present in the most variety. It is thought that there may even be undiscovered species of toucan in remote areas of the Amazon.

Toucans encapsulate the idea of a tropical bird. They are brilliantly coloured and quirky, with their huge curved beaks and individual markings. The iconic beak is what is so noticeable about a toucan. It is disproportionately large – about half the size of the bird's body. However, it is not heavy, being mostly hollow. The beak has sharp, serrated edges which are useful when grasping food. Inside the beak is a long, thin, fringed tongue which efficiently flicks food back into its throat. The beak can be a variety of colours: black, white, turquoise, blue, green, brown, orange, purple, red, yellow – and any combination of these! Their bodies are neat and compact and are also brightly coloured. When they sit still, their colourful plumage blends in with the forest foliage.

Their wings are short and suited for flitting through the dense forest but not for long flights. Toucans will not normally fly more than about a hundred metres at one time, nor do they need to. They have four toes and when perching, they grasp the branch with two toes pointing forward and two facing backwards. This also enables them to hang upside down and reach out with their bills to grasp fruit which would otherwise be out of reach. They are very noisy birds and are often heard but not seen because they live so high up and their shrill call carries a long way. Another unusual feature of these birds is that the tail is attached to the body by a ball and socket joint. By folding their tail backwards on to their back and tucking their beaks under their wings and tail they can fit into small places. This enables them to roost in small tree cavities out of harms way.

Toucans thrive in the upper canopy of the moist, lowland rainforests of the Amazon Basin. Food supply is plentiful and there is lots of protection in the dense foliage. They gather in small flocks, hop about in the high branches and fly from treetop to treetop.

Toucans love to eat a variety of fruits and berries. They also eat small birds and eggs in the nest, insects, lizards, bats, tree frogs and small snakes. When they consume fruit, they swallow it whole then regurgitate the seeds. Because of this, they are effective dispensers of seed throughout the forest and unwittingly help the forest to reproduce and spread.

The bright bills of toucans may help to attract a mate. Courtship games seem to include showing off their bills by playfully tossing fruit at each other, playing catch with fruit and by tussling with their bills. A pair of toucans will make their nest in a hollow tree somewhat lower down the canopy than where they normally live. It may be a cavity which has been used by other birds or animals but toucans will enlarge it, if necessary, with their bills. They will have between one and four glossy white eggs. Both parents will incubate them for about fifteen to eighteen days until the blind and naked chicks are hatched. Their beaks are very small at this stage. The babies will spend a couple of months in the nest, growing and developing, before they leave. The parents continue to feed them for some time after that.

Toucans are very social birds and like to forage for food in small flocks of five or six. Occasionally, they may visit the forest floor to retrieve fallen fruit. During very hot periods of the day, they hide together in the dense forest foliage. Members of the flock will preen each others' feathers except in breeding season when the male and female preen one another.



Predators of the toucan are large birds of prey such as the Harpy Eagle which will chase it through the treetops and seize it in the air. The toucan relies on its good eyesight to detect danger and will hide in tree hollows until the danger has passed. Toucans in a group will often set up a raucous chorus of noise whenever a predator is nearby. Snakes, lizards, weasels and rats will steal the toucan's eggs from the nest. The mother will peck at these smaller predators with her beak to defend her young. Because of their beautiful colours, people capture toucans to sell as pets in the exotic bird trade. Local Indians sometimes keep them as pets as well.

# The TOUCAN

## Set 5:4 ACTIVITIES



### REMEMBERING - What are the facts

1. What is the toucan's most noticeable feature?
2. What is the greatest distance a toucan will fly at any one time?
3. Write 4 questions like the ones above, and the answers.

**You must be able to find the answers in the report.**

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information

4. Draw a picture showing you understand how the toucan's special arrangement of toes works.  
**Include labels to explain what is happening in your drawings.**
5. Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### APPLYING - Using the information in another way

6. **Toucan Poster**  
Make a colourful poster for a wildlife park advertising this amazing bird.  
**A poster should have an eye-catching title, information in bullet points, and illustrations.**
7. **A Day in the Life of a Toucan**  
Use the information in the report to describe a day in the life of a toucan. You can do this by writing a story, a poem or rap, a diary entry, or a comic strip with speech bubbles and captions. Try to include as many facts about the toucan as you can.

### ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help the toucan survive

8. **Information Web**  
List all the physical features and behaviours of the toucan mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help the bird to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

Example : 

TOUCAN
--------

 → good eyesight → can see harpy eagles before they attack

### EVALUATING - Making judgments

9. **Vulnerability Rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.  
**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**  
**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**  
Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.
10. **Verifying the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.
  - Do an internet search on the toucan (or look for resources in the library).
  - Make a list of at least four sources of information.
  - Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
  - Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.  
10% = 1 or 2 facts ----- 50% = half the information ----- 100% = all the information

### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

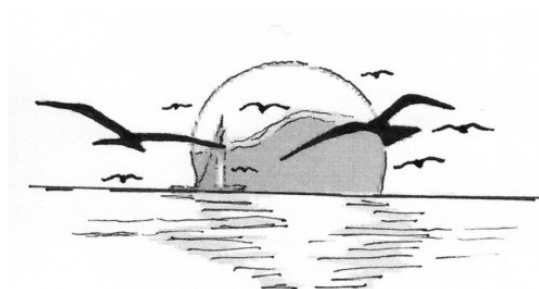
11. **Toucan Upgrade - overcoming natural and man-made threats**  
Make some adaptations to the physical features of the toucan and the way it behaves so that these birds are less vulnerable to threats and more competitive with other species. Here are some ideas to get you started ...
  - Better equipment for fighting off and avoiding predators
  - Modifications so that different food can be caught and eaten
  - Improvements to provide better protection for eggs and chicks**Remember to include diagrams, labels, and descriptions to explain your interesting ideas.**





# APPENDIX

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# CSI ONLINE

## A Framework for Whole School Reading Instruction

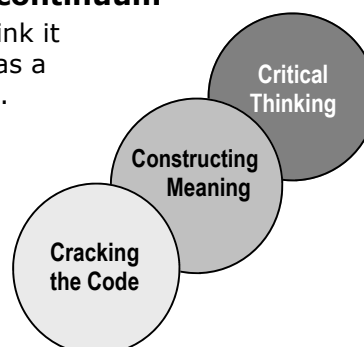
### The value of recognising a developmental continuum

When putting together a reading programme, we think it makes sense to see the acquisition of literacy skills as a developmental progression as shown in the diagram.

Initially, the space in the head of the beginning decoder is completely taken up 'cracking the code' - looking for familiar patterns and shapes; something that will help them make sense of the squiggles on the page.

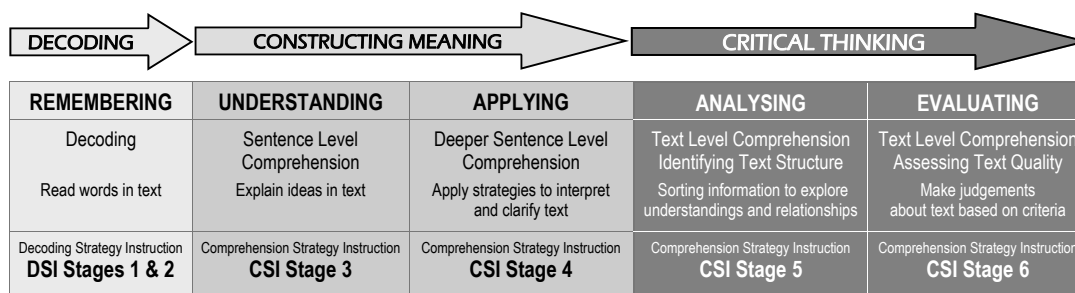
As the reader develops fluency with basic decoding strategies (recognising letter sounds and shapes, blends, some sight words) they have the space in their heads to move on to a higher order task, constructing meaning from the words and sentences. As they are taught comprehension strategies and given the chance to habitualise these, there is now room for higher order critical thinking.

Each of these stages provides a foundation for the next. We are all too familiar with the student who decodes fluently but has little understanding of what they have read. Their need is the explicit teaching of strategies to enable them to construct meaning not the expectation that they will embark on critical thinking responses to text or open ended inquiry learning.



### The CSI ONLINE Developmental Continuum

Our aim has been to produce a one page framework that will guide schoolwide reading programmes through this process. Below is an abridged version of our framework. It provides the structure needed to move students from Decoding through to Critical Thinking, ensuring that there is explicit instruction of all the reading strategies they need in a step-by-step progression with opportunities to habitualise each step and display fluency before adding in the next level of complexity.



CSI ONLINE and DSI ONLINE provide quality professional development for individuals or a school staff to upskill themselves in the delivery of these stages. This is step-by-step scaffolded learning available 24/7. Teachers can work at their own pace or coordinate with other staff to explore the teaching steps together.

For more information, recommendations from other schools, and data on the effectiveness of this training programme, visit our website [www.sharpreading.com](http://www.sharpreading.com)

# CSI ONLINE

## A guided reading routine that gets results

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The framework or developmental progression on the previous page takes care of "What do I teach?" The next question is "How do I teach it?". After many years of experimentation and trialing we have come up with a guided reading routine which delivers. We call it "The Three Steps".

Traditional guided silent routines foster passivity as the student waits for the teacher to unfold the game plan for the day. The teacher makes all the decisions beforehand and maintains the locus of control, often disrupting the flow with 'teachable moments'.

The prerequisites for this routine are as follows :

1. It must transfer the responsibility for unpacking the text from the teacher to the students.
2. It must be very predictable and highly structured so that the students (and the teacher) are freed up to focus on strategy practice.
3. It must be about guided practice not new learning (explicit instruction occurs in a different setting).
4. It must be simple and easy to follow.

Here is a summary of the routine. For more ... we recommend you sign up for our online training programme which can be found at **[www.handyres.com](http://www.handyres.com)**

## THE THREE STEPS

*For each chunk or paragraph of text*

### **STEP 1: Read Silently** (All CSI Stages)

Practice using strategies independently

### **STEP 2: Detailed Retelling**

Use "I think that means " (CSI Stage 3) and the DEEP FIVE comprehension strategies (CSI Stage 4) to unpack sentences

*"Have we got the message right?"*

### **STEP 3: Clear the Roadblocks** (All stages)

The chance to 'fix-it-up' when constructing meaning has broken down

Decide on a heading and trigger words (CSI Stage 5B)

Look for evaluation criteria (CSI Stage 6)

# Learning Outcomes in Reading

---

## **CSI ONLiNE Stage 3 : Sentence Level Comprehension**

LO: Unpack sentences and monitor own reading for comprehension

***I will know I can do this if, when I am reading, I can ...***

- ◆ Put sentences in my own words using "I think that means..." to check whether I have got the message right
- ◆ Recognise when there are roadblocks (I haven't got the message right)

## **CSI ONLiNE Stage 4 : Sentence Level Comprehension**

LO: Use the Deep Five comprehension strategies to check and clarify meaning and to overcome any roadblocks to comprehension

***I will know I can do this if, when I am reading, I can ...***

- ◆ Visualise what the words are saying
- ◆ Make connections to something I already know to clarify ideas
- ◆ Ask myself questions about the information report
- ◆ Form and revise an hypothesis about what is going on in the text
- ◆ Make connections to something somewhere else in the text

## **CSI ONLiNE Stage 5: Text Level Comprehension**

LO: Identify Non-fiction Text Structure

***I will know I can do this if, when I am reading, I can ...***

- ◆ Use Headings and Trigger words to create a memorable structure from a non-fiction text

## **CSI ONLiNE Stage 6: Text Level Comprehension**

LO: Evaluate Non-fiction text

***I will know I can do this if, when I am reading, I can ...***

- ◆ Use established criteria to make judgments about the quality of the writing in an information report

## Learning Outcomes in Science

---

The question underlying the investigation of birds is

***“How do the physical features and behaviour patterns of birds help them to survive?”***

This investigating question promotes a much higher level of thinking than the customary “find out about a bird” research task.

### **Big Ideas underlying the content**

- Birds have different structural, physiological, and behavioural features
- A relationship exists between the physical features of a bird and how these features enable it to survive.
- Endangerment of extinction results from the inability of a species to survive environmental change or changes in the factors that stabilise their population.

### **Students can ...**

- Identify the physical features of a species - how these features help the bird survive
- Assess the bird’s weaknesses
- Identify factors that will threaten or endanger the species
- Look for solutions - how might the species overcome the problem through future adaptations

## Learning Outcomes in Writing

---

The texts in this resource provide strong models of the information report genre. The logical progression for students having explored the structure and language features of the information report during reading instruction, is to have a go at writing their own.

The summarising of information during the comprehension strategy instruction (CSI Stage 5) develops the note taking skills required for individual research, moving students away from a cut and paste mentality.

### **Purpose of the Information Report**

- To record, organise and store factual information on a topic
- To define, classify, and describe the phenomena of our world

### **Text Structure**

- Introduction - a general classification and / or a general statement
- Body of the report - a series of paragraphs about various aspects of the subject. Reports in this resource cover the following - physical features, habitat, feeding behaviour, social behaviour, reproduction, predators, man and birds (NB: Not all reports include all of the above)
- Information Reports do not have an ending or conclusion

### **Language Features**

- Written in the timeless present tense
- Descriptive language but factual and precise rather than imaginative
- Contains technical vocabulary
- Style is formal and objective - author doesn’t express opinions or arguments

### **Students can ...**

- Identify the text structure and language features in the information reports they read
- Use criteria they have developed to critique information reports
- Use their knowledge about text structure and language features in their own information report writing

# USING FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

## COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES with BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

### The purpose

The primary intention of follow-up activities is to equip our readers with strategies to help them think more deeply about what they have just read; to show them how and to give them practice at deeper processing and higher order thinking.

Let's have a look at how this is accomplished with the activities in this resource. These activities are not busy work. They are an important part of comprehension strategy instruction and develop 'after reading' comprehension. They provide students with meaningful, independent work which develops 'after reading' comprehension skills while other small group instruction is taking place.

### REMEMBERING – What are the facts



This is the most basic level of processing information; answering 'right there' questions or literal comprehension. This requires the reader to remember a fact or be able to revisit the text and find it.

There is no inferential thinking involved here but for the less confident reader this is a non-threatening place to start, so it still has its place. A slightly more challenging spin is put on this by asking the student to come up with their own literal questions as well so there is some processing of the text required.

### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information



Understanding the message of the passage goes beyond the ability to decode the words. This is where the explicit teaching of strategies to construct meaning starts to have an impact.

Three activities used at different times in this resource build on the work that is done to construct meaning during the CSI guided reading lesson.

1. **New Vocabulary** - students have to manipulate some tricky or technical words to help embed them in their mental dictionary.
2. **Draw a picture to show you understand ...** (a concept in the text)  
The requirement to create a graphic representation of a concept or action can only be achieved if meaning has been constructed first. If that has not happened then the reader's lack of understanding is exposed and revisiting the text to find and clarify meaning is necessary.
3. **Heading and Trigger Words** - rewrite a paragraph  
Deciding on a heading and identifying words that will trigger the paragraph information in the reader's head is taught explicitly and practiced 'during reading' as part of Stage 5B of CSI ONLINE and is an important part of developing the reader's 'Big Picture' or text level comprehension of a text. This is a powerful tool for researching and synthesizing information and moves the reader away from a cut and paste mentality. Have a go at this yourself and see how easy it is to create your own writing which has a fresh personal voice.

See page 56 for an exemplar you can use to explain and model this activity with your class. Page 57 includes an example showing how the headings and trigger words column is filled out during the guided reading lesson. See this explained more fully and modelled for the teacher in CSI ONLINE Stage 5B.

### **APPLYING – Using the information in another way**



These activities require students to take the information in the article and rework it in a different way. By creating something in a different genre the reader is forced to process the information and deepen their understanding.

Activities include poems, stories, diary entries and comic strips which should incorporate information from the report.

### **ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help birds survive**



Taking apart a text that they have read, looking at it through their own eyes and then putting it back together again helps the reader to take ownership for the information and ideas.

The analysing activity in this resource asks students to identify the physical features and the behavior of a species of bird and make some cause and effect statements about how these characteristics help the bird to survive in its chosen habitat. This information is displayed in a graphic organizer, an information web. More able students may extend this to a concept map showing all sorts of interconnects between pieces of information.

See pages 57 and 58 for examples.

### **EVALUATING - Making judgments**



Readers must learn to be discerning about information and ideas that are presented to them, recognising the need to check validity and reliability and getting experience at doing it.

Having carefully constructed the meaning, reworked the information through applying and analysing, the reader is now in a position to generalize and make judgments about the ideas presented.

This first evaluation activity asks the reader to use their developing understanding of how birds interact with their habitat and ecosystem and then make a judgment about the vulnerability of the species.

The second evaluation activity requires them to use other sources to check the information that has been presented. This also allows them to read more widely around the topic and in so doing exposes them to different writing styles and further insights into the species.

See example on page 59.

### **CREATING - Coming up with new ideas**



Using existing knowledge to create new possibilities and solve existing problems is considered to be the most complex thinking activity with obvious implications for the life-long learner in our world today.

These activities allow students to problem solve and have some creative fun with species adaptations.

# Activity Exemplars

## **UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the information**

Choose one paragraph from the report. Decide on a heading for that paragraph. Write down some 'trigger words' (words that trigger the information in your head). Use the heading and trigger words to rewrite the paragraph in your own words.

### **Original Text**

Canada Geese are very family-oriented. They find a mate when they are about three years old and stay with this mate faithfully. The female lays her eggs in a reed nest lined with grass and feathers. The goose will pull downy feathers from her own breast for this. Both parents sit on the nest during the incubation time although it is usually the female, with the male standing guard. During this time, they moult, losing their flight feathers. They cannot fly away until they grow new ones. This is nature's way of ensuring that they will be there until the chicks hatch, 25-30 days later. In fact, they are very devoted parents. Both of them protect and care for the babies, called goslings. As the goslings grow, they join up with others and form small groups called crèches which are always looked after by a few adults. Adult geese can be aggressive, hissing at and chasing an attacker. In the autumn the young geese are able to migrate south for the winter

### **Heading and Trigger Words**

#### **REPRODUCTION**

- family
- faithful
- nest - grass., feathers
- Incubation - share
- Can't fly
- Crèches
- hiss, chase
- Autumn - migrate

### **Text written from Heading and trigger Words**

*Family is very important to Canada Geese. Once they find a mate they stay together. When they are ready to breed they build nests out of grass and feathers. The mother goose pulls feathers from out of her chest to line the nest. When the eggs have been laid they take turns at sitting on them to incubate them. The special feathers on their wings that are important for flying fall out at this time of year. This means they can't fly away and leave their eggs or chicks. Once the chicks have left the nest they get together with other chicks. One of these groups is called a crèche. Some adult geese will keep an eye on them. Parents will get very aggressive if someone threatens their nest or babies. By autumn time the young geese are big enough to migrate to a warmer place for winter with their parents.*

### **Identifying Headings and Trigger Words**

On page 56 we have included a sample of what the formatted students script may look like once readers are working on CSI Stage 5. These notes are generated during the guided reading lesson and these can be used for completing the 'UNDERSTANDING' follow-up activity.

# The CANADA GOOSE

The Canada Goose is a common North American water bird. There are many types of this goose which are alike but differ in size.

They are native to arctic and temperate North America although they have been introduced in other parts of the world. They enjoy living in watery areas that are surrounded by open country. They can be found at lakes, river mouths and coastal swamps.

The Canada Goose is a large, handsome bird. Its head and long neck are black and it has a wide white band under its chin. Its plump body is brownish-grey. It has webbed feet which are good for swimming and for walking on wet or muddy ground. It can fly steadily for hours during its long migrations. It makes a loud honking sound. The male, called a gander, is slightly larger than the female, called a goose.

This strong-looking bird loves to eat plants, mainly young green vegetation, tender shoots and roots. Its bill is designed for holding and tearing blades of grass with a jerk of its head. It will graze for hours on grassy areas and eat available grains from fields. On the water it also likes small insects and fish.

Canada Geese are very family-oriented. They find a mate when they are about three years old and stay with this mate faithfully. The female lays her eggs in a reed nest lined with grass and feathers. The goose will pull downy feathers from her own breast for this. Both parents sit on the nest during the incubation time although it is usually the female, with the male standing guard. During this time, they moult, losing their flight feathers. They cannot fly away until they grow new ones. This is nature's way of ensuring that they will be there until the chicks hatch, 25-30 days later. In fact, they are very devoted parents. Both of them protect and care for the babies, called goslings. As the goslings grow, they join up with others and form small groups called crèches which are always looked after by a few adults. Adult geese can be aggressive, hissing at and chasing an attacker. In the autumn the young geese are able to migrate south for the winter with their parents.

Geese are very social. They like living in large flocks. If one of them is attacked, a number of others will group together to fight off the danger. Their huge migrations are part of flock life. They take place twice a year. In the autumn, thousands of these birds fly south from Canada to the warmer areas of the United States. Some even go to Mexico. In the spring, they will fly back north in time for the new season of growth. They learn the flight paths from their parents. By flying in the V-formation, a slip-stream is created which makes flying easier, except for the lead bird. Older birds take turns flying in the lead.

Many predators, including man, kill Canada Geese. They are protected by law but it is legal to shoot them in the hunting season if you have a licence. Also, dogs, racoons, foxes, owls and weasels will attack them or their babies and try to steal their eggs. However, Canada Geese fight back, especially when protecting the goslings.

Canada Geese used to be endangered but now they are very numerous. This can cause problems. Some people call them pests because of the large amount of faeces a flock of geese produces every day. This can pollute waterways. They can also be a danger near airports. It was a flock of Canada Geese that flew into the engines of an American aeroplane, causing an emergency landing in the Hudson River.



## Headings and Trigger words

Use this column to write down a heading and trigger words to summarise each paragraph. (see CSI Stage 5B for more details)

### CLASSIFICATION

- water bird
- many
- differ

### HABITAT

- native - Arctic, temperate
- introduced
- Water - open country

### PHYSICAL FEATURES

- neck black -White chin
- body brown-grey
- webbed - mud
- migrates
- honk

### Food

- plants - young
- bill - head jerk
- graze - hours
- water - insects, fish

### REPRODUCTION

- family
- faithful
- nest - grass, feathers
- incubation - share
- Can't fly
- Crèches
- hiss, chase
- Autumn - migrate

### MIGRATION

- flocking
- twice
- Autumn - south
- Spring - north
- learn - flight
- V-formation - turns

### PREDATORS

- law
- licence
- Steal eggs
- fight back

### AT RISK?

- numerous
- pests
- faeces - pollute
- aeroplane

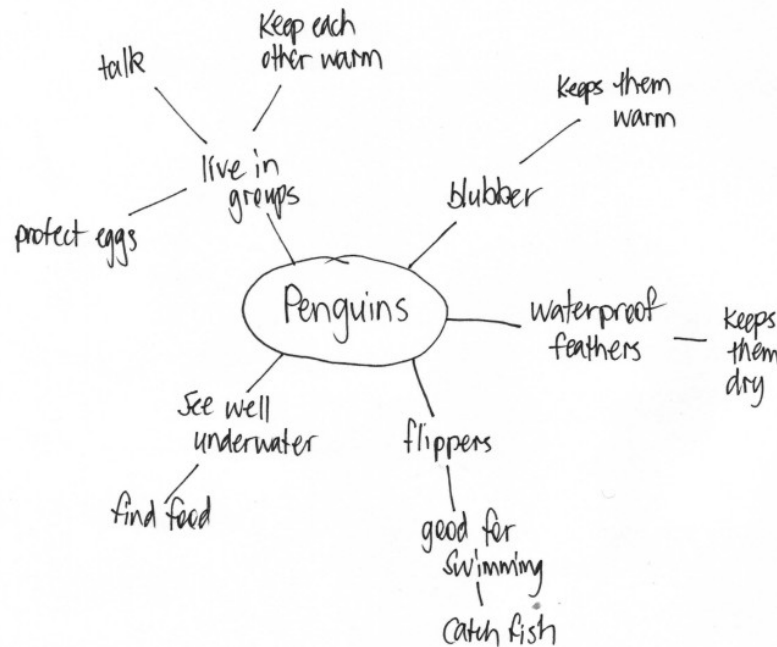


## ANALYSING - Identifying the features that help birds survive

### Information Web

List all the physical features and behaviours of North American birds mentioned in the report. Brainstorm ways in which these features and behaviours help birds to survive. Present this information as an INFORMATION WEB.

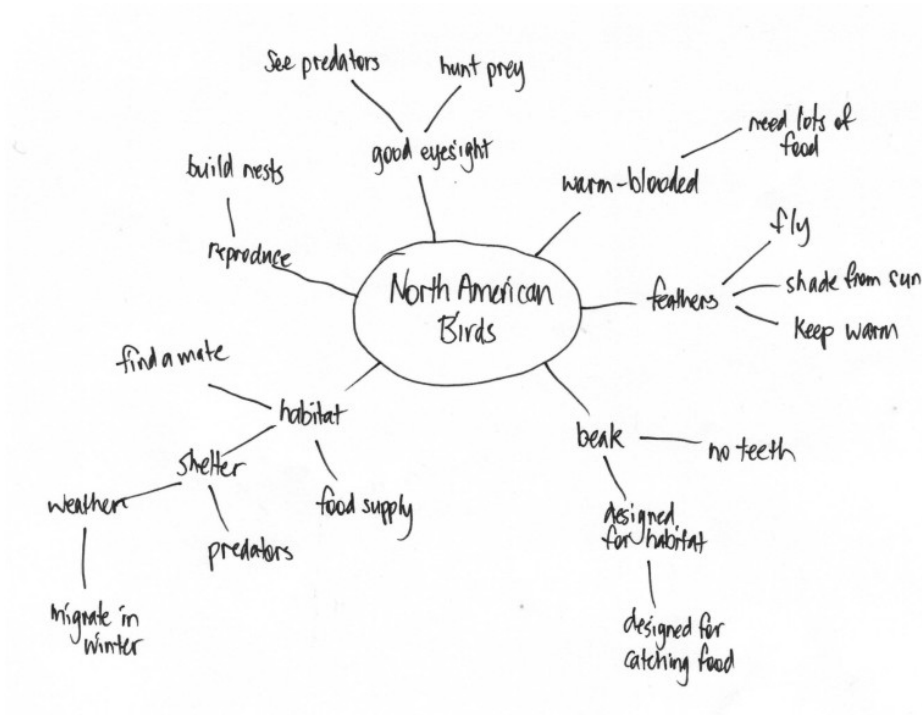
### Set 1 The Penguin



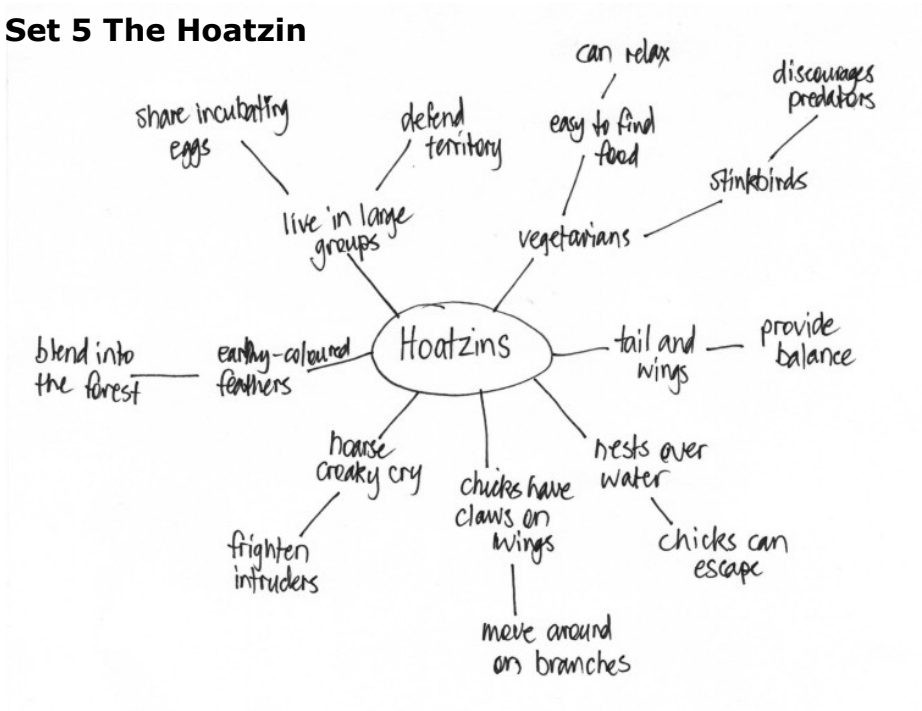
### Set 3 The Kookaburra



## Set 4 North American Birds



## Set 5 The Hoatzin




## EVALUATING - Making judgments

**Verifying the Information** - It is important to check whether the facts are accurate.

- Do an internet search on the Canada goose (or look for resources in the library).
- Make a list of at least three sources of information.
- Tick off or highlight information in the report that agrees with what you have found.
- Decide on the percentage of information that you have been able to verify.

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## Other sources used to verify information

[www.wikipedia.com/canada\\_goose](http://www.wikipedia.com/canada_goose)

[www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/canada\\_goose](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/canada_goose)

'Birds - A visual Guide' by Joanna Burger

I have verified 50% of the information.

## EVALUATING - Making judgments

**Vulnerability Rating** - Using the information you have been given in the report, make a decision about how AT RISK this species is. Include risks from predators and MAN.

**1 = very secure, little threat from predators and man**

**10 = very high danger from predators and man - easy prey**

Give reasons for your rating using information from the report or your own ideas.

## Canada Goose - Vulnerability Rating 5

I think the species has a middle of the scale rating. They are good flyers so can escape four-legged ground dwellers unless they are caught unawares. There might be a problem during the breeding season when they are unable to fly. They eat mainly vegetation - they don't have to catch their food so there should always be a good supply. I think the main threat would come during the hunting season when they are hunted for sport.